

Over the next twenty years, Cowgirl Creamery became an organic-certified creamery known for its award-winning cheeses, and its founders became leaders in sustainable food and artisan cheese movement in the North Bay. With over ten different types of cheeses produced from milk from neighboring dairies and two creameries with a staff of nearly 100, the company is still growing its business and influence in the region. At the time of its opening, there were few cheese companies in Marin and Sonoma. Today, the West Marin region is considered a dairy and cheese appellation, and the region's artisan cheese industry has bloomed thanks in large part to the success of Cowgirl Creamery. There are 28 cheesemakers in the region and more in the making, and the Marin-Sonoma Cheese Trail boasts a large following.

Not only did the founders of Cowgirl Creamery serve as advocates and mentors for local agriculture and cheese producers, they engaged with non-profit organizations supporting sustainable agriculture and with government officials to advance the interests and growth in the environmentally-responsible food movement. Sue served on the board of Marin Agricultural Land Trust for 18 years and is on the board of the California Artisan Cheese Guild. Peggy serves as President of the American Cheese Society, a national platform that provides educational resources for other cheesemakers, retailers, distributors and cheese enthusiasts.

Inducted into the *Gilde des Fromagers* in 2010, Cowgirl Creamery has earned the respect of international cheese experts in addition to their robust reputations in the regional and national artisan cheese marketplace.

From producers to consumers, Cowgirl Creamery occupies an unparalleled space in its influence on artisan cheesemaking worldwide. Mr. Speaker, on the occasion of their 20th Anniversary it is fitting to honor and thank Peggy, Sue, and Cowgirl Creamery for their impressive success and generosity, and to wish them success in the decades to come.

#### CONGRATULATING BEACON HILL VILLAGES ON THEIR 15TH ANNIVERSARY

**HON. STEPHEN F. LYNCH**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 13, 2017*

Mr. LYNCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 15th Anniversary of Beacon Hill Village in Boston. It's an anniversary with significance for the whole Nation and they are to be congratulated on reaching this special milestone.

Mr. Speaker, Beacon Hill Village was created by, and for, neighbors determined, as they aged, to continue to thrive and grow in the neighborhood they loved. There was no ready model. A core goal of Beacon Hill Village members was keeping independent. There isn't much choice about growing old, but there are choices about where and how to do so. A little help with the ordinary business of living is always welcome, yet Beacon Hill Village's philosophy was from the start all about choice: its members are quite capable of figuring out what they need and when.

But the revolution in aging our nation is experiencing also presented an extraordinary opportunity beyond better managing daily life.

Most of our nation's elders will live many years after retirement: Their goals for those years are to be productive, engaged and open to new people, new experiences, and new ideas. Its members quickly and clearly understood how Beacon Hill Village could advance those goals.

Almost from the start, word of Beacon Hill Village's success serving its own members spread. More and more communities, from near and far, were soon flooding Beacon Hill Village with requests for help in creating villages of their own. In response, just a few years after it opened in 2002, Beacon Hill Village was the chief force behind the creation of the Village to Village Network, dedicated to helping communities everywhere design their own villages reflecting local needs and using local resources. Today that Network has more than 350 open and developing villages serving members numbering over 40,000. These villages are all across the nation, in 45 states and the District of Columbia, and in six countries abroad.

Mr. Speaker, I am convinced, that the best days of Beacon Hill Village, the Village to Village Network and the villages of the nation, are still ahead of them. Their message is simple, forceful and optimistic: aging should be to each individual's own design. No one, as they age, should be told where to go or how to live. Villages can help their members take responsibility for their own aging and make choices resulting in vibrant, purposeful lives lived on their own terms, in their own homes and communities. With this message the village movement is changing how elders experience aging and how our society perceives aging. Every American benefits from these changes.

On February 13th in Boston, Dr. Atul Gawande, whose celebrated 2014 book *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* continues to sustain a lively national conversation about living well and ending well in old age, will speak at a public forum to salute and conclude Beacon Hill Village's fifteenth-year celebrations. *Being Mortal* has generous things to say about how Beacon Hill Village and villages inspired by it provide a valuable model for such living and ending well. Dr. Gawande's remarks will be simulcast nationally to more than 150 villages where more than 5000 will participate remotely in the celebration.

One of the great issues worldwide today is how to support and care for aging populations. By 2030, twenty percent of our nation's population will be over 65, an estimated 83 million people. The numbers are even larger in many countries around the world. The Village concept and Dr. Gawande's profound understanding of the importance of community and choice offer valuable insights and solutions for this challenging phenomenon.

Mr. Speaker, in recognition of the positive impact that the village movement has had on the experience of aging, I ask that my colleagues join me in saluting Beacon Hill Village and villages throughout the nation by designating Monday, February 13, 2017 as National Villages Day.

IN HONOR OF LIZ THOMAS

**HON. DONALD NORCROSS**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 13, 2017*

Mr. NORCROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Liz Thomas, a smart and savvy businessperson, a wonderful friend and someone who always supports organizations and causes near and dear to her heart.

On Saturday, February 11, 2017, Liz's friends, family and colleagues will gather together to celebrate at the Hearts of Gold Samaritan Gala and to honor her as she receives the Samaritan Healthcare and Hospice Circle of Excellence Award.

Ms. Thomas began her communications career in the press office of New Jersey Governor Thomas Kean. Then, she moved on to serve as Deputy Director of the New Jersey Division of Travel and Tourism. In 1989, she opened her first public relations firm and she has been working hard in that field ever since.

In her professional capacity as co-founder and CEO of Thomas/Boyd, Ms. Thomas is frequently called upon to use her extensive knowledge of communications, government relations and event management to ensure that businesses, non-profit organizations, professional societies and service companies have successful events and communication campaigns throughout the area.

Ms. Thomas has received numerous honors and recognitions throughout her professional career. She was named a Person to Watch by *SJ Magazine* and was a member of *NJBiz's* inaugural class of Best 50 Women in Business.

In addition to her professional accomplishments, Ms. Thomas is proud to lend her name, time and talents to a variety of organizations throughout the area and is the Vice Chair of New Jersey Public Media, the Chair of the Samaritan Healthcare and Hospice's Board of Trustees, and Vice Chair of the New Jersey Governor's Women's Conference. She is also a member of many great organizations, such as the Salvation Army Kroc Community Center Capital Campaign and the New Jersey Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

It is all altogether fitting that we congratulate Liz Thomas on receiving the Samaritan Healthcare and Hospice Circle of Excellence Award and thank her for her contributions to the State of New Jersey and the many organizations that she devotes so much of her time and talent. Ms. Thomas continues to give back to her community both personally and professionally and I wish her continued success in all her endeavors.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE SHORT HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**HON. BARBARA COMSTOCK**

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, February 13, 2017*

Mrs. COMSTOCK. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to recognize my constituents of the Short Hill Historical Society, formerly the Hillsboro Community Association (HCA), for their preservation and restoration efforts in one of the oldest, historic cities in Virginia's 10th District—Hillsboro, Virginia.